



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

YW

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/626,932	07/25/2003	Benoit Risi	9680.205USD1	4743
23552	7590	07/12/2004	EXAMINER	
MERCHANT & GOULD PC			SELF, SHELLEY M	
P.O. BOX 2903			ART UNIT	
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55402-0903			PAPER NUMBER	

3725

DATE MAILED: 07/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/626,932

Applicant(s)

RISI, BENOIT

Examiner

Shelley Self

Art Unit

3725

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 May 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 5-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-4 and 12 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 5 and 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 7-11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 July 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/25/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

Applicant's election with traverse of the invention of Group II (clms. 5-11) in the reply filed on May 21, 2004 is acknowledged. Because, Applicant failed to positively recite any traversal arguments, the reply received, is deemed an Election without traverse.

Claims 1-5 and 12 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on May 21, 2004.

Drawings

Figures 1-9 are objected to for poor legibility and corrected drawing are required.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because they fail to show the *plate/rod* (pg. 12, lines 1), the *conveyor* (pg. 12, line 1) and the *longitudinal hole or slot* (pg. 12, lines 6, 7) as described in the specification.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the following elements of claim 5 must be shown: conveyor, heater, plate, curing area and controller or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s). No new matter should be entered.

Any structural detail that is essential for a proper understanding of the disclosed invention should be shown in the drawing. MPEP § 608.02(d). Corrected drawing sheets are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended

replacement-drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the examiner does not accept the changes, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 5-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter, which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. With regard to claim 5, the "heater" (line 9) has not been described in the specification so as to provide enablement. It is unclear how the heater operates with the apparatus.

With regard to claims 6-9 and 11, it is not clear as to whether the "plurality of fingers" (clm. 6, line5) refers to the "tooth" defined in the specification or if the plurality of fingers is separate from the tooth. Correction/clarification is required.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter, which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 5-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 5, appears to be aggregate in nature, in that it fails to positively recite the critical interrelationships between the means for applying longitudinal press and the controller to the rest of the claimed elements (i.e., conveyor, assembly area).

Additionally, regarding claim 5, the word "means" is preceded by the word(s) "holding" in an attempt to use a "means" clause to recite a claim element as a means for performing a specified function. However, since no function is specified by the word(s) preceding "means," it is impossible to determine the equivalents of the element, as required by 35 U.S.C. 112, sixth paragraph. See *Ex parte Klumb*, 159 USPQ 694 (Bd. App. 1967).

Further, there are insufficient antecedent basis for following limitations:

"said curing area" (clm. 5)

"said cured floorboard" (clm. 5)

All of the claims should be reviewed for clarity, definiteness, positive recitation of all critical interrelationships and antecedent basis concerns.

Art Unit: 3725

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cromeens et al. (3,927,705) in view of Hill (6,189,682). Cromeens discloses an apparatus for making board comprising a conveyor belt (2, 4, 6, 8, 10), an assembly area (fig. 1, 3,5,7,9), a press (13) located at a second portion on the conveyor, a heater with lateral pressure means for exerting lateral pressure a plate movable between a retracted position and pressing position (col. 15, lines 7-54), means for applying longitudinal pressure, heater (12), holding means and output area (224, 225, 226). Cromeens does not disclose a controller. Hill teaches in an apparatus the use of a controller wherein the apparatus has a pressing and conveying means used for forming boards having jointed/interengaging ends as means to control the operation of the apparatus. Because the references are from an almost identical art, it would have been obvious at the time of the invention to one having ordinary skill in the art to provide Cromeens with a controller so as to control operation of the apparatus as taught by Hill.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 6, contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the 35 U.S.C. 112 rejections and including all of the limitations of the base claim

Claims 7-11 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims and if any 35 U.S.C 112 rejections were overcome.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Shelley Self whose telephone number is (703) 305-5299. The examiner can normally be reached Mon-Fri from 8:30am to 5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Supervisor, Allen Ostrager can be reached at (703) 308-3136. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular and After Final communications.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIE or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SSelf
July 7, 2004



ALLEN OSTRAGER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700